

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE EASTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

Plaintiff,

vs.

RAMIZ ZIJAD HODZIC,

a/k/a Siki Ramiz Hodzic

SEDINA UNKIC HODZIC,

NIHAD ROSIC,

a/k/a Yahya Abu Ayesha Mudzahid,

MEDIHA MEDY SALKICEVIC, and

a/k/a Medy Ummuluna,

a/k/a Bosna Mexico,

ARMIN HARCEVIC,

Defendants.

Case No. 4:15-CR-0049 CDP- DDN

**DECLARATION OF
CHRISTOPHER CHANG,
DEFENSE INVESTIGATOR**

I, CHRISTOPHER CHANG, declare the following to be true under penalty of perjury:

1. My name is Christopher Chang.
2. I am an investigator for the defendants in this case.
3. I traveled to Bosnia on April 13, 2017, investigating the underlying facts of this case.
4. Attached is a true and correct copy of my notes from my initial interview with Jasmin Jasaveric.
5. Also attached are pictures of Abdullah Ramo Pazara from his time in Aleppo Syria.

Signed on the 21st day of JULY, 2017 in _____ LONDON _____.



Christopher Chang, Defense Investigator

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255 Research and Investigation
INTERNAL MEMO

To: HARCEVIC Team
From: CKB/CCC
Re: Jasmin JASAVERIC interview
Date: 04/13/2017

Meeting with Jasmin JASAREVIC

The relevant dates for us are July – September 2013. Harcevic allegedly transferred funds (US\$1.500) to Siki Ramiz HODZIC (RH) on September 24, 2013. Those funds were allegedly intended for Abdullah Ramo Pazara (RP).

Chris Chang and I met Jasmin Jasaveric (JJ) at the house of Goran Hodzic (GH – brother of Ramiz Hodzic) in Jelah, Bosnia and Herzegovina. Also present at the meeting were:

1. Amir and Senada Huskic (husband and wife who are good friends of Ramiz Hodzic and who also live in Jelah and served as translators)
2. Goran Hodzic (brother of Ramiz Hodzic) whose wife was also present
3. Gorana Hodzic (mother of Ramiz Hodzic)
4. Sanel Hodzic (brother of Ramiz Hodzic)

All persons present stated that they did not know Armin Harcevic (AH) and had not heard of him before. The town that he is from is approximately 167km from Teslic.

Jasmin Jasaveric (JJ) – JJ stated that he would be happy to talk about himself and about Abdullah Ramo Pazara (RP) but that he did not want to speak about the other Bosnians that were with him and their cases.

JJ stated that he met RP originally in Teslic after he (RP) came back from the US where he had been living. JJ stated that RP came back from the US and was wearing white Arab clothing similar to clothing worn in Saudi Arabia. JJ described him as walking around Teslic as if he had just come back from Mecca. JJ did not know him before that. He wanted to meet him and let him know that it is dangerous to do that because of how he would be perceived by people in Teslic. That is how JJ met RP. JJ stated they were not friends from childhood but met in Teslic after RP came back from the US.

JJ stated he went to Syria to help women and children and those fighting against the Assad regime. He was not a member of any group before he travelled to Syria. JJ actually arrived on the Syria-Turkey border before RP and waited for him there. JJ met up with RP on the Turkish border in July 2013 and they were instructed by individuals from a group called Nour al-Din al-Zenki, who were under the command of the Free Syrian Army (FSA) that transport to Aleppo (he referred to it by its name in Arabic, Halab) would be provided for them. They were not taken to Aleppo by the FSA or those from

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Nour al-Din al-Zenki but by civilian drivers in cars and vans. There was no real plan, nor were they very organised but they wanted to join the fight against the Assad regime, and they wanted to help the innocent people and those that were suffering as a result of the fighting, but there was no definite plan to join a specific group. The first group that they fought with were the Free Syrian Army (FSA) and they were with them for the first 2-3 weeks that they were in Syria. RP and JJ were together from July 2013 until around January 2014.

In Aleppo their duties included securing the hospital and helping the injured, no matter who they were. They would work in the kitchens and also distribute food. They also participated in the armed conflict against Assad's government forces. The FSA provided them with clothing, food and accommodation in houses in the city. After the first few weeks fighting with the FSA, JJ and RP joined with Jaish al-Mujahideen (JAM) but even when they joined with JAM they were still part of a collective effort against the Assad regime of approximately 10, 000 fighters from different groups. Within this collective force there was the FSA, JAM, Al-Nusra, amongst others, and many different fighters of different nationalities. They were all united in their fight against the Assad regime. JJ stated that their leader in JAM was Salahuddin Shishani. *"Not Omar Al-Shishani"* as some media reports have claimed. ISIL didn't exist at the time. JJ stated they were there to support groups that were interested in freeing Syria and its people from the Assad regime. There were lots of little groups and not a lot of organisation.

This lack of organisation and lack of cohesion with all the different groups eventually led to these groups fighting with one another. The collective group began to split and different factions of fighters began to break off and leave Aleppo. As the anti-Assad forces in Syria diminished in numbers Assad forces began to overpower them in Aleppo.

At the start of 2014, RP left to join another group. He wanted JJ to come with him but JJ refused. RP separated from the remaining group of fighters in Aleppo and went with a smaller group of Bosnians, Chechens and others. At this point many of the small groups started fighting amongst each other and JJ didn't want to be a part of that. He felt that he would eventually get into conflict with one of his Muslim brothers and that was not why he had come to Syria. The group RP joined was called Bayt (house in Arabic) Commandos or House Commandos in English. RP wanted JJ to join his group but JJ didn't want to. This was the group that RP went with and he did not know if RP became affiliated with ISIL at some point later. JJ tried to maintain contact with RP but it was difficult, but in the contact they had, he did not remember RP saying that he had joined ISIL.

The brothers wanted to fight Assad originally. When they started fighting among each other for control and started killing each other he left. JJ arrived back in Bosnia February 18, 2014 and was immediately detained by the Bosnian Security Services. The Bosnian government's case against him is still ongoing. JJ stated that he did not want to go with RP but he also couldn't stay in Syria as he was fearful he would fight with one of his Muslim brothers and that could even end up being RP.

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JJ stated the allegations that RP was a leader are not true. He was just a fighter, and he was not a leader. On some occasions he was punished for being in the kitchen too much or being on the internet. He didn't speak Russian or Arabic so he couldn't be a leader. RP also did not organise or lead the Bosnians into Syria. Many like JJ himself just wanted to get over there and join the fight against the Assad regime. And many like himself knew they would be able to do that as long as they were able to reach the Turkey-Syria border.

JJ stated that he went to Syria and joined the fight of his own free will, and that he was able to leave at any time and he did. He was a civilian and not forced to be there. The only rules within many of the groups were that the fighters left as they came. Arms, clothing and any other equipment were to be surrendered if a fighter left any of the groups fighting in Aleppo. It was very easy to cross over from Turkey into Syria. He left Syria with the help of the FSA. The Red Cross and other Humanitarian organisations were supporting the FSA when he was there and he saw Red Cross vans loaded with supplies whilst he was there.

JJ also stated that the group that they were with had American weapons and uniforms. He could not say where they came from or who financed them. He remembered the uniforms and the M-16 rifles. While they were on the border the group Nour al-Din al-Zenki were there securing the border. They were under the command of the FSA and when JJ arrived at the border he helped to secure the border for a short time before he was taken to Aleppo.

In this period between July 2013 and January 2014 when JJ and RP were together he remembered there was a point when RP was waiting for money to come to him from overseas, but he does not know exactly how much it was or who had sent it. He did remember that some of that money was used to buy food for people in Aleppo that did not have any.

JJ did state that Almir Dzinic would also remember this period that he spent with RP but that he is currently in jail.

JJ stated he is willing to give a formal statement if necessary and prepared to help in any way that he can. JJ gave us some pictures which have been saved to file. He took the pictures in Halab (Aleppo).

Note: Nour al-Din al-Zenki - This group was supported by the US government during this time period

See also Authenticity and Development front:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Authenticity_and_Development_Front





